

REMARKS

The examiner in an Office action mailed January 10, 2006, restricted the claims into four groups pertaining to different species. According to the examiner based on a telephone conference with applicant on January 26, 2006, the distinctive features of the four species groups requiring restriction are as follows:

- Group I, claims 1-33, 47-55, 77-81, directed to an attachable thumb spica member;
- Group II, claims 34-45, 60-66, 68-69, 84, and 91-95, directed to a hinged web portion;
- Group III, claims 85-90, directed to axis of rotation of hinged web portion not co-planar; and
- Group IV, claims 97-99, directed to different fabrics and mechanical locking

Applicant provisionally elects to prosecute Group II, claims 34-45, 60-66, 68-69, 84, and 91-95, directed to a hinged web portion. These claims are readable on the embodiment shown in FIG. 35, for example.

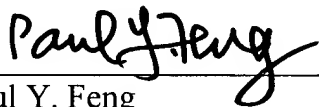
Applicant would like the examiner to kindly reconsider the division of Group II and III claims, because the non-coplanar hinged web portion claims of Group III are actually a subset of the hinged web portion claims of Group II. Thus, the Group II and Group III claims should not be divided into separate species. Applicant kindly asks that the examiner combine the Group III claims 85-90 with the Group II elected claims 34-45, 60-66, 68-69, 84, and 91-95 and examine all of these claims as a single group.

Assuming no generic claim is found allowable, the claims of Groups I and IV are unelected and might be the subject of future divisional applications.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge deposit account no. 06-2426 for any unforeseen fees arising in connection with the filing of this paper.

Respectfully submitted,

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